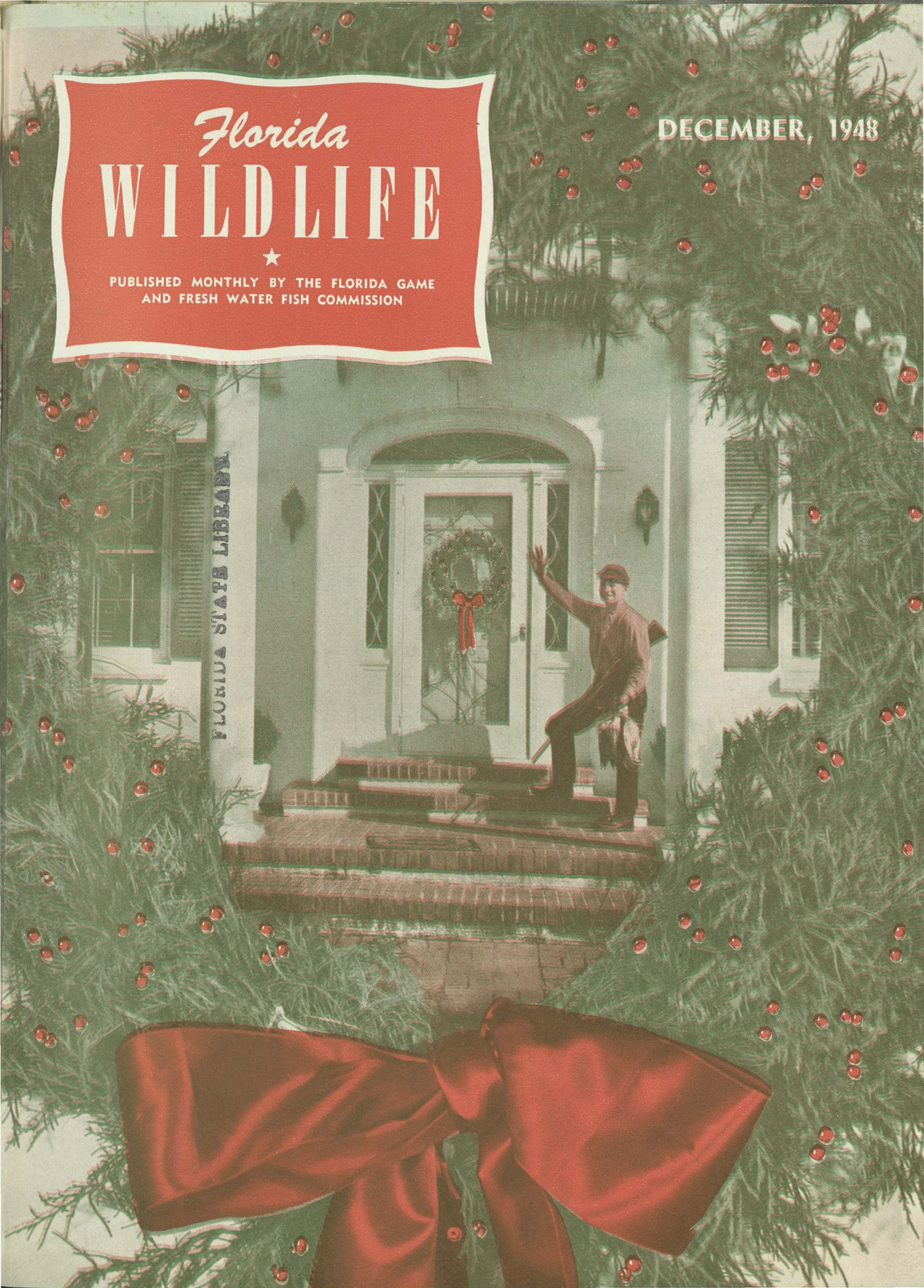
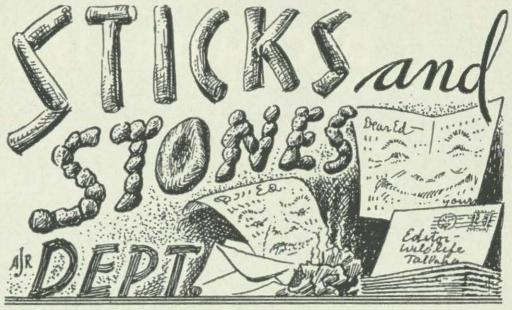
Florida WILDLIFE

DECEMBER, 1948

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

FLORIDA STATE LIBRARY





GOBBLER OR HEN?

Dear Sir:

Have been receiving *Florida Wildlife* since last February and must say that it is an excellent publication. The only thing I have found wrong with it is that it is only published once a month.

I have just received a 1948-49 summary of hunting and fishing regulations. Everything is clear to me except the ability of a hunter to determine the sex of a turkey in the woods as it is a rare case in my experience in hunting to tell what you have shot until you retrieve it. I would also like for you to advise me just what constitutes posted property. Lands upon which an ordinary hunter may hunt are scarce and it seems to me that the only one who will be able to do much hunting in the future will be the large landowner or one who is financially fixed to join some hunting club. I have lived in Florida since 1919 and have purchased a good many hunting and fishing licenses since that time and have never had any trouble. I would hate to walk into some trap and be carried into court.

WILLARD R. BOLAND,
Winter Haven, Florida

(Gobblers are much larger and darker than turkey hens. They have beards and longer legs too. If you aren't sure —you'd better go easy on the trigger finger. If you start hunting on property that displays "no hunting" or "posted" signs, you are a likely candidate for a trip to court. ED.)

IT'S A DANDY

Dear Sir:

Your magazine, *Florida Wildlife,* which I have been receiving for several months, is a dandy. I especially enjoy the articles on fishing and where the fish are biting. Thanks for a fine magazine.

J. B. KNIGHT, SR.,
Tampa, Florida

(Continued on Page 14)

The Cover — *The proud duck-hunter is Jimmy Lee, Tallahassee sportsman and former state amateur golf champion.* — **Photo by C. H. Anderson.**

VOL. 2, NO. 7

Florida WILDLIFE

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

DECEMBER, 1948

For the Conservation, Restoration, Protection, of Our Game and Fish

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Published monthly by the
FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
Tallahassee, Florida

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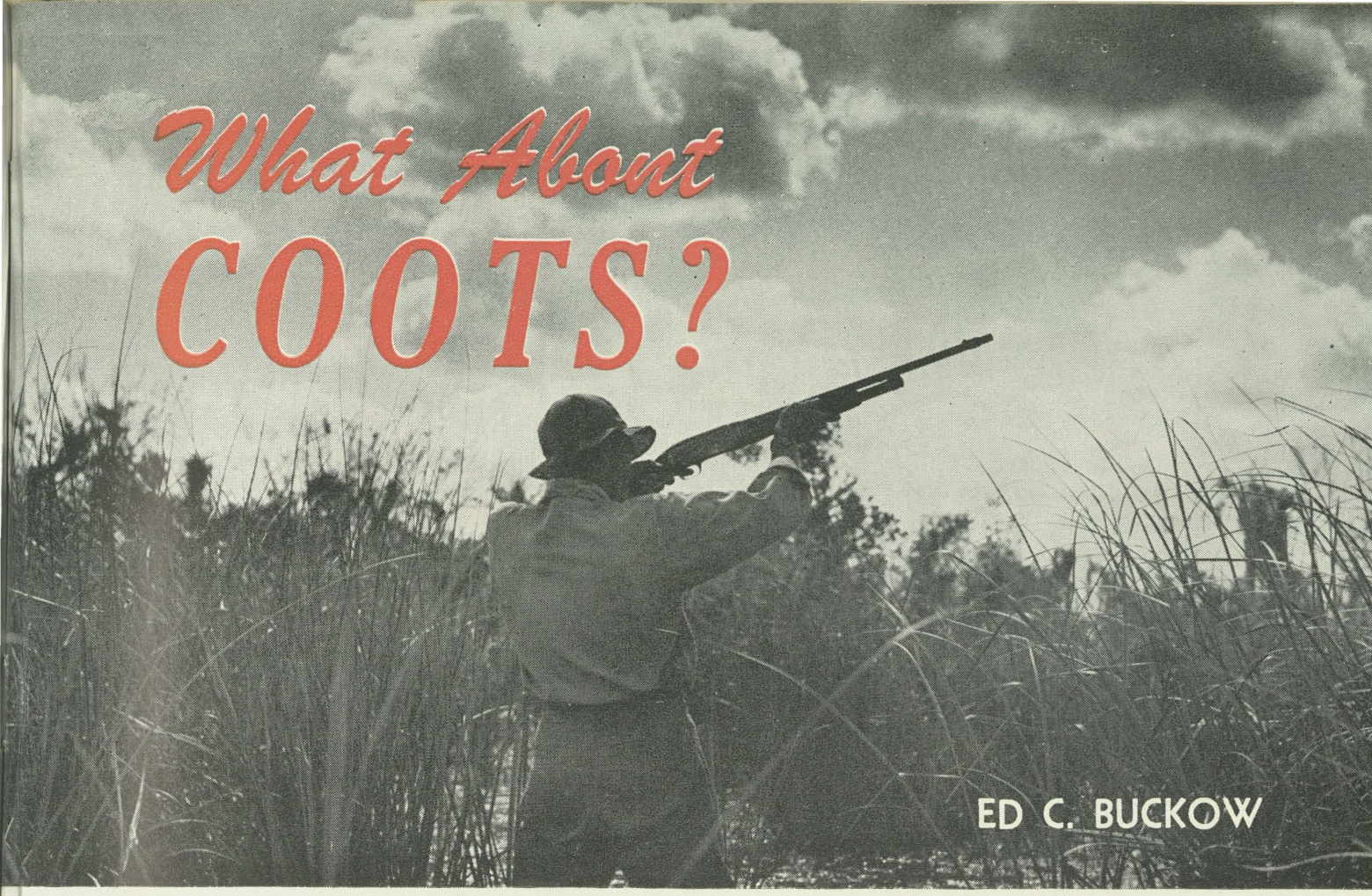
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Editorial contributions are welcomed, and all photographs will be returned after use. Manuscrips, news notes, and photographs should be addressed to Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla. Any changes of address should be reported promptly.

Permission to reprint any material in this publication is hereby granted, provided proper credit is given. Copies of reprints would be appreciated.

Entered as Second Class Matter Nov. 8, 1947 at the Post Office at Tallahasse, Fla., Under the Act of Aug. 24, 1912.



What About COOTS?

ED C. BUCKOW

A GROUP of coots laboriously taxied away from the oncoming skiff, and after a series of indignant squawks and cackles, finally took to the air in disorderly flight.

The two duck hunters in the boat stared at the birds intently. They had just finished an unsuccessful morning duck shoot, and the comical coots offered a diversion from their gloomy thoughts.

"Let's shoot a couple of coots," said one of the hunters.

"Why" answered the other. "Hell, they're all gizzard!"

Such a remark on the worth of the coot symbolizes the opinion most sportsmen hold for this duck-like member of the rail family. The majority of hunters won't eat them; thoroughly despise the very name "coot," and will not even flip a trigger finger in their direction if there is a possibility the gun report will spoil their chances for a shot at a pintail or teal.

In short, the coot is an outcast from the game bird list.

It's true that in some ways the coot is deserving of his bad reputation. On the other hand, the sportsman who thinks it is beneath his dignity to fill his hunting coat pockets with this bird is really depriving himself of a pretty substantial addition to Florida's game crop.

The prolific coot is multiplying at a rapid rate in North America, and with the current, general shortage of waterfowl compared with a growing army of duck hunters, there is no reason why the coot shouldn't be recognized as a legitimate game bird —which he really is.

Florida can count more than half a million coots any given season. The state's share of coots is higher than any other species of migratory game fowl. Why, then, shouldn't Florida nimrods take advantage of this sizable slice of game birds?

It seems duck hunters have built quite a case against the coot, with the result that this poor bird is scorned. To begin with, many sportsmen don't consider the bird "good shooting." One nimrod exaggerated:

"You have to almost throw rocks at the derned things to get them to take off and fly."

The most plausible reason for the bird's reluctance to fly is ridiculously simple. Would you run from somebody who wasn't after you? For years the coot has enjoyed comparative security, never being seriously hunted like other game birds. There is really no reason then, why coots should take to the air in fear when man approaches with a gun.

Coots WILL fly when persistently hunted. Although they are not as fast as a duck, and often have difficulty getting their rear ends to clear the water for flight, they do offer a challenge to a shooters skill. Coots, contrary to the opinion of some, are good fliers. In fact, I know

There's a shortage of ducks and a surplus of hunters. Why not balance things by going after Florida's half-million largely ignored coots?



A few hunters like to gun for coot—but all too few.

plenty of duck-hunters who would have trouble getting their limit of the scoffed-at birds.

THE bird's reluctance to fly is partly due to its boldness, which is an outstanding characteristic of the coot's unlikeable personality. And there lies another reason for the hunter's distaste for the bird. Coots are born mean and they get meaner as they grow. They will fight each other at the drop of a rice shoot, and mayhem is their password at breeding time.

Most of the time the coot's bad humor is confined to squabbles over a morsel of food. If that is the case, fatalities are light, with the extent of the injuries being a rap on the head with a bill, loss of a few feathers or a bruised windpipe. Come mating season, however, and it's a different story. During this period they become very serious about their responsibilities as parents and will fight to the death anything that interferes.

Perhaps one of the biggest reasons why nimrods prefer to ignore the coot as a game bird is because it has a reputation for being "bad tasting." This is an unmitigated fallacy. As a North Florida wildlife officer so ably puts it: "They're darn good eatin'!"

A recent incident in the North Florida area sort of substantiates the wildlife officer's statement.

A federal game warden on a day's routine patrol came across three individuals who had in their possession ninety coots. Obviously the hunters had developed a keen taste for coot meat, because when faced with arrest they didn't seem too impressed, but when the warden threatened to confiscate the coots they squealed bloody murder. They told the warden that the coots were slated for the main course at a big Thanksgiving Day family shindig.

The trouble is that too few sportsmen know how to properly prepare the bird for the platter. If coots are not treated well in the pot, they can be a bit unsavory. But . . . when coots are correctly prepared, you're in for a mighty delicious meal.

THE coot is valued as a good-eating bird in many portions of America. In some sections of the upper Gulf coast hunters actually prefer coot to other species of waterfowl. There it is said that a nimrod will trade a mallard for a coot any day in the week.

Those Floridians who know how to cook the coot will tell you that the bird has a lot to offer. The first step in the proper preparation of the coot is to "gut" the bird as soon after it is shot as possible. Then don't even think about plucking the bird. Just peel the skin along the breastbone and take out the breast.

If you prefer fried fowl, soak the coot breast in salt water for several hours. Then dry the meat, season with salt and pepper, and flour and fry much the same as chicken.

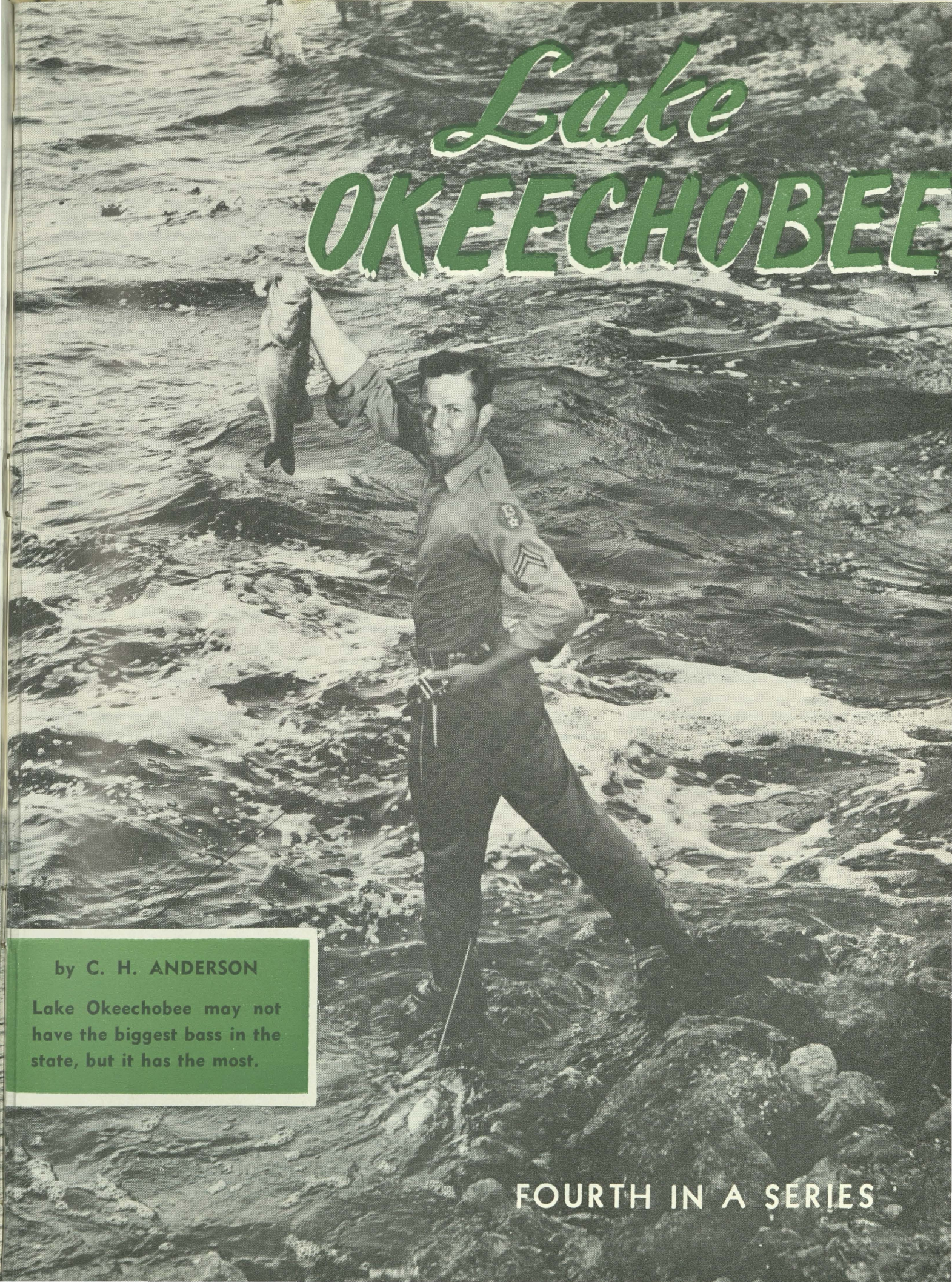
For a real coot dish, Grandma Burr's barbecue recipe is tops. Again you use only the breast and soak in salt water. Season with salt, pepper, chopped onions and celery. Steam until tender, place in pan, cover with barbecue sauce and place in the oven. It should be baked until the sauce

(Continued on Page 11)

This Florida pond alone has enough coots to keep a small army of hunters busy for a week.



Lake OKEECHOBEE



by C. H. ANDERSON

Lake Okeechobee may not have the biggest bass in the state, but it has the most.

FOURTH IN A SERIES



Lake shore towns cater to the sport fisherman for an annual income second only to Okeechobee's vast farming and cattle industry.

"WELL, now I'll tell you," said the Old Cracker, "I just have to admit that we don't have the biggest bass in the world but I'll make a little bet that we have more bass than any other place in the state. Or in the world, for that matter," he quickly added.

The Old Cracker was talking about Okeechobee and he may have been right on one or both points. For some unknown reason the bass in the Okeechobee area are some two to four pounds short of the weight of their cousins of the lakes and streams in all other parts of the state. A recent check with camp operators disclosed that a fourteen pound black beauty, caught near Observation Island, was one of the largest bass ever taken from the lake waters. The usual "big ones" brought to gaff, however, are not exactly small fish. The boating of a seven or eight pounder is not uncommon but the top weight of these big fellows will seldom exceed eleven pounds.

But as the Old Cracker observed, what the Okeechobee bass lack in poundage they certainly make up for in number. To take your bag limit of legal bass seldom requires more than a couple of hours fishing.

Recently two sports fishermen became involved in the old argument of fly casting vs. plug casting. After a few hours of expounding the merits of each the two sportsmen decided the only thing to settle the old question would be a trip to Lake Okeechobee. Securing a boat and guide at Clewiston, on the southern shore of the lake, the fishermen were taken to a spot in one of the many canals that skirt the shore and told to "have at it." They did! One with the fly rod, the other plug casting. The rules were simple. They were to fish from the same boat. The guide was referee. Baits were not limited. Either angler could use underwater, topwater, poppers, wigglers or what have you. Eight hours was the limit. When the party returned to camp that evening the official tally was 168 fish caught—160 returned to the water. The fly caster had boated 96 fish, the largest weighing four pounds six ounces. The plug caster accounted for 72 bass but had landed the largest, a seven pound three ounce fish. That may or may not prove the merits of either type of fishing but it does bear out Old Cracker's statement that there are a lot of fish to be caught in Okeechobee.

A GIANT, shallow saucer of water on the north edge of the Florida Everglades Okeechobee was, like many places in the state, named by the Indians who retreated there over a century ago. The name in Seminole means "big water," and it's a

Spillways for the plant and mineral laden waters pumped from the low lying muck farms provide a fish mecca. Anglers crowd these spots to take speckled perch and bream.



very appropriate title. With its 730 square miles the lake is the second largest body of water entirely within the boundaries of the United States.

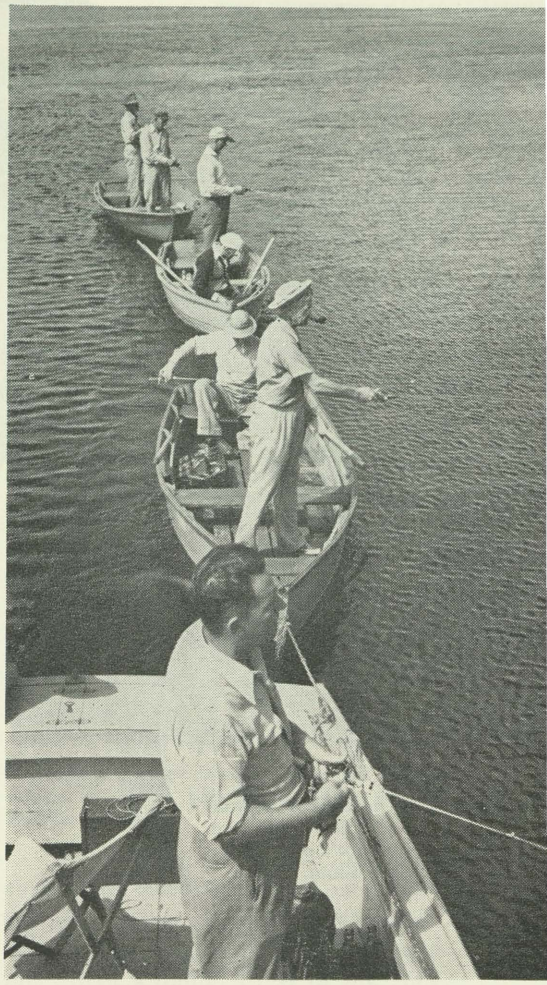
Okeechobee serves as the drainage basin for the Kissimmee river watershed, and until 1932 the excess waters from heavy rainy seasons were allowed to overflow the lake banks into the Everglades. Winds of more than fifteen miles per hour would cause a wind tide, often raising the water several feet. The wind tide was the cause of the tragic loss of life around the lake during the hurricanes of 1926 and 1928. Late in 1932 construction was begun by the Federal Government to completely enclose the lake with an earth dike and the building of a system of drainage canals and flood gates that would control the waters of the lake during periods of high water and wind and also afford many small farmers the opportunity of draining, by the use of huge pumps, thousands of acres of lush muckland. The construction of the dike and the pumping of the mucklands are two reasons for Okeechobee's good fishing.

The 68-mile dike, 25 feet high and 75 to 150 feet through at the base required many thousands of yards of dirt, all of which were dug from the shore making a channel around the lake with an average depth of 20 feet. Long, narrow and sometimes water-covered islands separate the lake proper from the deep canal.

It is along these canal banks, among reeds, marsh grass and in the hyacinth shade that the bass feed on the small minnows and aquatic plants that are pumped into the lake from the low-lying muck farms. When the dike was completed and the flood gates installed in 1939 the lake level was raised. The water covered shore side farms that today have a heavy, grassy marine growth in which young fish are spawned and remain in hiding from their cannibalistic elders. These elders hide in the edges of the grassy areas waiting for the small fry to venture out. Fishing here is tops. Locally it is known as "fishing the hay fields." Turner's Cove, Moonshine Bay, Observation Island and the old Moore Haven Canal all offer hay field fishing.

THOUGH Okeechobee is famed for its bass, pan fishing is a bet not to be overlooked. Bream and speckled perch up to two pounds aren't to be bragged about. That is just the usual size here. Fishing is at its best for these in the swift water near any of the large discharge pipes into the lake from the muck farms. Here again the fish come to feed on the smaller fish, fertilizer and small plants that are being pumped in.

Although the lake is large and thousands come here to fish each year, accommodations are few. Some of the larger camps in Okeechobee City, Clewiston and Moore Haven offer overnight cabins, guides, boats, motors and live bait but the majority have only boats and motors. When you go fishing on Lake Okeechobee you may not find every convenience you like, but chances are you will get your share of the item that's really important—fish!



This might not be fishing according to Walton, but four anglers of this "fishing train" bagged the limit by noon.



Fishing the canals near the "hayfields" on the south shore of the lake it's no problem to take your limit of bass in a couple of hours. Fishing here is best in the late afternoon.



These Plott hounds are stars on the author's bear hunting team.

BEAR DOGS *Are* LONG SHOTS

Raising bear dogs is like backing a pair of deuces—the odds are against you from the start.

by JOHN H. PHIPPS

RAISING and training bear hounds is exactly like betting your bank-roll on a pair of deuces—the odds are against you from the start! As a matter of fact, your pair of deuces, backed up with a little bluffing, will probably win the pot a great many times while you are drawing blanks with your bear hound activities.

Although Florida is recognized for its top-flight bear hunting, you can count its organized bear hound packs on the fingers of one hand—and my pack is one of them. It's true that numerous individuals own and train a bruin hunter or two, but none of them have seen fit to face the disappointments and expense that are part and parcel of throwing in your chips on raising a full pack of hounds.

My decision to raise and train an efficient pack of dogs came three years ago when I went on my very first bear hunt in northwest Florida. Since that time I've had my share of disappointment, a few heartbreaks and considerable expense—but, I've learned a lot about raising bear hounds and I've learned it all the hard way.

The difficulty faced in getting together a pack of efficient bear hunters is best demonstrated by the fact that the nine hounds I now run are the cream of the crop from a pack of dogs that once numbered 34. What's more, I frankly admit that there's still room for a lot of improvement.

In my mind, a trustworthy bear dog is an exception rather than the rule simply because he has to meet so many requirements that aren't faced by deer, fox, coon or rabbit hounds. In the first place, "making" a good bear hound runs into direct conflict with Mother Nature herself. Florida bears, of course are recognized fighters and killers. To a dog closing in on a bear at bay, a slap from bruin's paw means five, painful welts extending from one end of his back to the other. Dogs recognize too that a vicious bear bite results in agonizing pain and very likely—death. That explains why fearless, fighting bear hounds are few and far between.

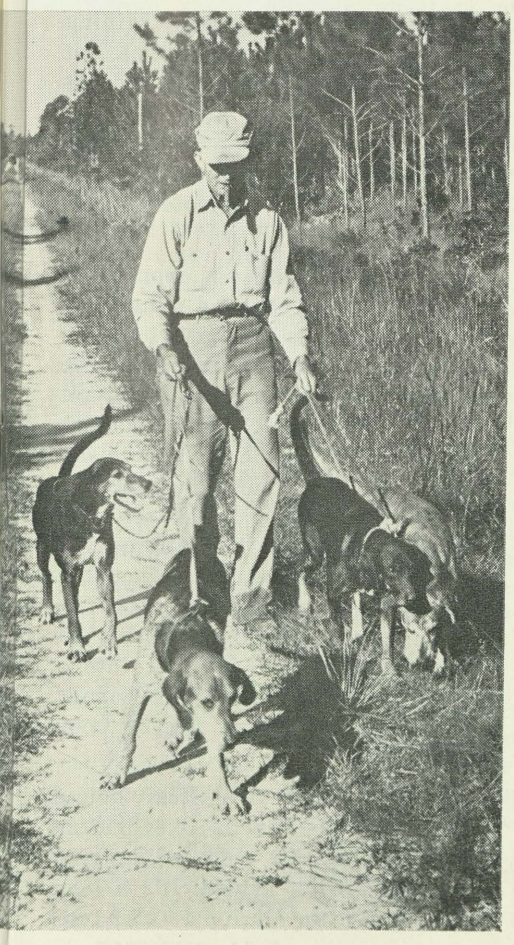
EXPERIENCE has taught me that most northern trained hounds have to become acclimated to the south before they can prove their value on a hot bear trail in Florida. This condition results from the wide difference in hunting terrain and the fact that a pursued bear here has instincts that are totally strange to a "Yankee" trained dog.

(This is the first in a series on popular types of hunting dogs in Florida. Next month's piece will be on bird dogs.—EDITOR)

Some time ago, a woodsman with 20 years of successful Florida bear hunting to his credit told me: "Ba'ars seldom tree in Florida. Nope, they don't tree, but they'll shore wear your legs down when you're tryin' to foller 'em."

My experience in three years of bear hunting has been the same. I have never seen a Florida bear actually treed. On an average, northern bears take a short, fast run ahead of the hound pack and then scamper into a tree to virtually "thumb their nose" at the baying dogs below. Southern bears follow an entirely different pattern. In-Instead of treeing, they instinctively strike for the thickest cover and the deepest swamp water, move at lightning speed and pause in their flight only to battle with the hounds whenever they approach too closely to bruin's heels. What's more these flights away from the dogs aren't exactly a picnic for the hunter because many times they'll extend from five to 15 miles in a tantalizing, zig-zag course. All too frequently the exhausting course will end in utter disappointment for hunters and hounds alike.

Bear hounds are held on leash until a trail is found, then are released individually or in teams.



The life of a bear dog is rugged to say the least and it takes an exceptional hound to pass four or five important requirements that entitle him to his "diploma" in the Florida bruin hunting college. First, it is all-important that he possess a keen nose that will pick up and then hold as tight as glue to the scent of a fleeing bear. Next, he must have the mental and physical stamina enabling him to stay with a bear trail for six and eight or maybe ten and twelve hours at a stretch even though it leads through deep thickets, hide-tearing brambles and pools of stinking swamp water. At all times, a good bear dog must be able to ignore his natural "childish" instinct to abandon an exhausting bear chase to enjoy the thrill and safety of hunting a deer, a coon or perhaps a fox. It is all important that a bear hound possess limitless courage too. Once he catches up with bruin he must have the fearless willingness to start an "alley fight" with his enemy—carrying on a biting and snapping in-and-out battle while shielding himself from snarling bear teeth and flashing, razor-sharp claws. Last but not least, he must have a deep, sonorous voice that can be heard by the hunters a mile or two away when the dogs have actually spotted the infuriated bear. I realize that these requirements are a big order, but they are of vital importance in organizing a successful pack of hounds. The requirements are difficult to meet, so it's but small wonder that there are but few qualified bear hounds in Florida today.

IT WAS these requirements that compelled me to cut my original pack from 34 to the nine dogs I now use. The sad part of this "sifting program" was that I sold or gave away hounds that I had acquired because of their successful records on other game. Amongst them were several blueticks that had won high ratings as bruin hunters in the west. They were big and beautiful—and not worth a damn. First of all, they weighed from 80 to 90 pounds. They were entirely too heavy to stand the physical punishment involved in following an average bear trail in Florida. In the west, they'd been accustomed to chasing a bear to a tree in more open country. But, here in Florida, bears refused to take to a tree and after two or three hours the big hounds would start tiring —then they'd drop completely out of the chase.



A hound's perfect day ends after his master downs a bruin and hangs him up for butchering.

I find it interesting today to study the widely varying breeds of hounds that survived the requirements of good bear dogs—for instance the nine that make up my present pack. I played no favorites when I started disposing of the hounds that didn't measure up to my expectations. Many of them were "bluebloods" that came from highly rated stock and cost considerable money. I disposed of them, regardless of breed, once they failed to stand the gaff of Florida hunting.

Just to prove that blue-ribbon stock is secondary in picking bear hunters, one of my most valuable dogs today is "just plain houn'" that originated in Oklahoma. Then too, I retained two black-and-tans that were raised in nearby Marianna. Then there are two Goswicks, a breed that originated in Arizona, and four of the dogs are members of the famous Plott hound family. Put them all together and you have a bunch of bear hunting specialists.

YES, EACH of my hounds is an expert at bear tracking and all of them are experienced in keeping to the set pattern that I follow in all my hunts. All my hounds are restrained on leash after we arrive in a forest. As soon as we spot bear tracks, a female Plott hound is given the scent and later released from her leash. If she stays with the trail, we keep on unleashing other hounds in groups of two and three. If the pack's baying indicates the dogs are on a hot trail, we eventually release old "Rock", an excellent black-and-tan bear hound—though he sometimes shows a definite weakness for coons. We know there's a bear ahead if "Rock" stays with the pack because he's the type that gets as enthusiastic over a bear fight as a kid does over a circus. Assuming that Rock stays, we close in as quickly as possible with the assurance that old bruin is just ahead. On the other hand, if Rock decides that the other hounds have been following a cold trail—he'll suddenly switch directions, find a coon trail, and within minutes all the other dogs will leave the cold trail and accept his high-pitched invitation to a coon chase. If this happens, we catch the dogs, put them back on leash, and prepare to start hunting again in different territory.

I have had a lot of enjoyment raising and training bear dogs during the last three years—I've had a lot of grief too. Assuming that you are an ardent bear hunter with a yen to own a full pack of hounds—I warn you to count to 10 and do a lot of serious thinking before you make the

In the first place, you'd better have a tremendous amount of patience when you go in for bear hound training seriously. You'll have to study and understand each dog's individual characteristics if your training activities are to succeed. You'll also have to be capable of recognizing a hound's good points and still retain the ability and willingness to forgive his weaknesses so long as you are convinced the dog is trying his best to "catch on."

Experience has taught me that it is impractical to attempt to put a puppy into training before he is six months old. Then, during the early days when he is trying to catch on to his first lessons, you'd better be as patient as a kindergarten teacher is with the small fry.

There's another very important angle in hound training—and a very expensive one too. That's the groceries! When I first started training hounds, I could feed a dog amply for five dollars a month. But times have changed—and Rover's feed bill now kicks a ten dollar bill in the face every thirty days.

Effective and regular training trips, almost daily, are essential. Not only do these regular trips afield put him closer to the day when he'll become a finished product—but they also serve the important purpose of keeping the dog in top-notch physical condition.

Maybe it will be six months, a year, or even a year and a half before the day rolls around when you finally turn your "student" loose with the other hounds on a red-hot bear trail. That will be the important day when you decide if he has developed into a top-notch bear dog or just an ordinary coon chaser. It's just about an even bet it'll be the time when you painfully realize that it would have been a lot more fun to bet your bank-roll on a pair of deuces instead of feeding it into a prospective bruin chaser that turned out to be a mediocre fox or coon hound instead!

Just remember this. Bear hound raising and training is like drilling for oil, mining for gold, or jumping off the Brooklyn bridge. It's a long chance, but after all, it's a lot of fun!

A CONSERVATION FABLE

By Dan Saults

Once upon a time, three men were lost in a deep wood. It was a frightening experience, in a way, because they weren't particularly good woodsmen. But they had matches and some food and one of them had a pocket knife; berries were ripe. They knew nothing about making a snare for game and had no guns but they had courage. They decided to force their way out of the forest —they were men, the highest creation of earth!

It was very difficult, yet there were ways. They followed down the slopes until they found a stream and worked their way along it, on the theory that this clear, wooded creek would seek a river and that men would live along the river. It was a good theory.

Their food supply would last several days. Water was certainly no problem: their creek was very clear and little springs rose at intervals along the bank. Birds called from the trees above them.

When the sun grew hot, these men would swim in the deeper holes of the little stream or lie in the shade of a great tree, while the life of the forest stirred about them. They exulted in the deer that came down to drink from their creek; they watched fish lazing in the limpid pools.

At night, these men built up a fire and lay about it, listening to the owls hunting and the soft passage of nocturnal creatures. The ripple of the stream lulled them to sleep. Almost, they were happy.

One day the trees thinned out and the creek widened; there were no more pools but only a broad sheet of shallow water. Then the forest was gone; there were sun-burned fields slashed by deep gullies. The creek became muddy and still wider; ahead of them, suddenly, they saw a big river that carried a load of silt between caving banks.

These men waded through the slime of a recent flood, stumbling across a sand bar that receding waters had left in a cornfield, to gaze on the river. Dead carp floated along the bank and perfumed the air, an oil slick coated certain unmentionable objects that drifted with the current.

"Thank Heaven!" cried the men. "We have returned to civilization!"

From the Missouri Conservationist

WHAT ABOUT COOTS?

(Continued from Page 4)

has had time to season the meat, basting from time to time.

For "coot jumbili" you use the breast, liver and gizzards. The coot's gizzard is almost as big as a man's fist and the liver is said to be quite rich in vitamins, so this recipe is a prize package.

First cut the livers and the gizzard into small pieces and place these and the breast in salt water and parboil until the meat is ready to fall from the bone. Then add chopped onions, celery, okra, tomatoes, Irish potatoes, green peppers and hot pepper pods. Simmer this mixture until vegetables are well done and add cooked rice, stir, and permit to simmer a while longer before serving.

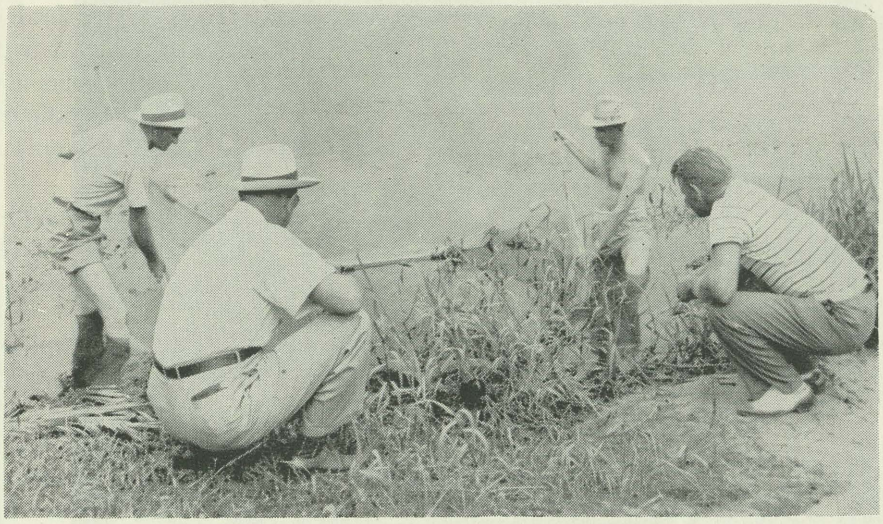
Coot may be prepared in several other ways such as cooked in rice; with dumplings; fried country style or roasted ducks.

IF you want to shoot some coot, and live somewhere in Florida, chances are you won't have to go very far to find them. They begin to arrive in Florida—one of their favorite winter resorts—in early fall from their summer quarters over most of North America. By the time winter rolls around their numbers are great in marshes and waters all over the state. North Florida marshes, the Lake County area and the Lake Okeechobee section are among their favorite haunts. They head north in early spring to brave the cold. Few stay behind to cope with Florida's semi-tropical clime.

Although the layman might have trouble distinguishing a coot from a duck, there are pronounced differences. The coot's bill is white and chicken-like, and the color of the body is blackish to slate grey. The coot's antics in the water reveals the bird's identity almost immediately. Because coots have three long, lobed toes instead of webbed feet, they appear to walk through the water, their head bobbing back and forth in rhythm with the steps.

ONE of the coot's main identification marks is his eating prowess. The bird seems to never stop eating. All day long he dives and jogs through the water, gulping huge hunks of pondweed. Because of these eating habits and the fact that he can dive to a depth of 25 feet for

(Continued on Page 19)



Game and fish commission biologists and Lakeland sportsmen test seine a city lake before setting it aside for the bids.

FISHING HOLES FOR KIDS

By BILL PIERCE

YOUTHFUL anglers in three of Florida's cities are getting breaks that have its adult fishermen casting envious glances.

Close on the heels of a series of "fishathons" put on especially for "junior" by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, three Florida cities instituted what may be termed an exclusive "kids fishin' hole."

It all started in Lakeland when Fred Jones, outdoor editor of the Lakeland Ledger and wildlife commentator of radio station WLAK, began telling the public through his column and over the radio what a great thing it was to encourage youngsters in their piscatorial pursuits.

Jones was all for persuading the Lakeland City Commission to set aside one of the local lakes for use by young anglers only. The Lake County Sportsman's Club thought the outdoor columnists idea was fine, and they began to back him in his project almost to the last man. When a delegation brought the "fishin' hole" idea to the attention of the City Commission, they liked the plan too. As a result the young fishermen of that city have a lake all to their own where they don't have any adult competition.

The capitol city of Tallahassee has also recognized "junior" as a fisherman. The City Recreation department and the Exchange Club made every effort possible to have Lake Ella set aside as a kid's fishing lake. The City Commission stamped an OK on this project late in August.

The State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has assisted the city in their plans for Lake Ella, with biologists surveying the lake and offering suggestions. Youngsters up to 16-years of age are eligible to use the lakes' facilities, and it is planned to have a junior wildlife officer force to police the lake.

The Pinellas County Commission approved a "kiddie's fishing pond" at a recent meeting. The project was being sponsored by the Pinellas Conservation Club, which asked the commission for a 10 year lease on Crest Lake in Clearwater.

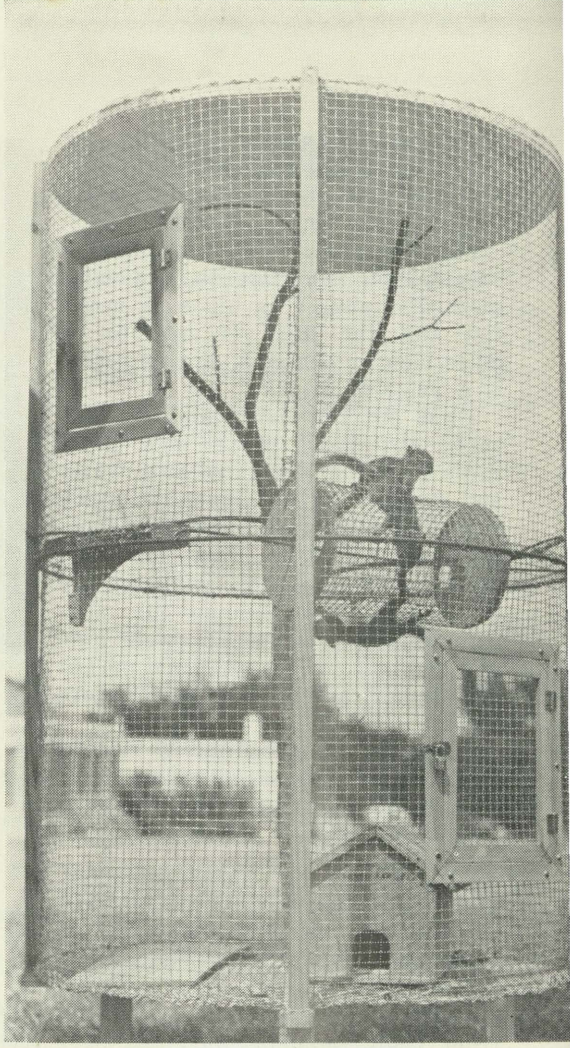
Commissioners agreed to appropriate adequate funds for cleaning, fertilizing, and stocking the lake. This work will be done under the direction of the U. S. Soil Conservation Agency and U. S. Biologists.

Tom T. North, chairman of a special conservation committee of the Pinellas Conservation Club, hopes that the teenage fishing area will be an aid in curbing juvenile delinquency. He added that the club plans to hold an annual "fishathon" at the lake.

Clearwater is the third city in the state to permanently establish a fishing lake for children. Leaders in the conservation and outdoors fields throughout the state believe that other cities will soon follow their example.



When first found the baby squirrels had to be fed with an eye-dropper; then they graduated to a nursing bottle. Their diet now consists of homogenized milk, spiked with cod liver oil, and an occasional dish of sunflower seeds.

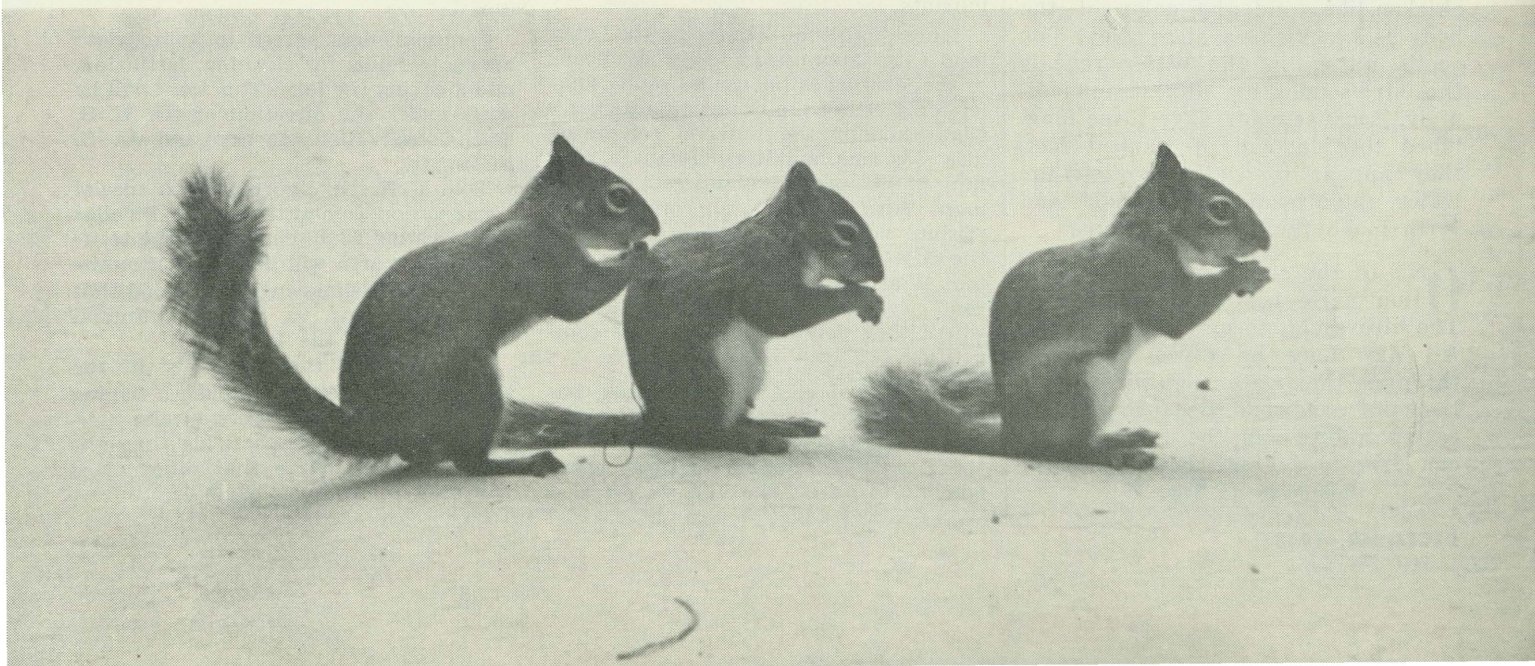


Mr. Tindall's ability as a cabinet-maker produced this outdoor home for the trio of bushy-tails.

Bushy-tailed Babes

by
Tod and Neal Swalm
A Picture Feature

Nuts haven't been on the squirrels' diet list long, but Peggy, Shorty and Doc seem to be doing all right with them here.



WHEN the thunder of hunters' guns broke the quiet of the woods November 24, three little squirrels doubtlessly took time out to thank their lucky stars for a haven of comfort and safety in the home of Orlando furniture dealer J. M. Tindall.

Because of an accident which took their Mama the three little bushy-tails—Peggy, Shorty and Doc, by name—are now living a life of luxury as regular members of the Tindall family.

A hit-run motorist caused the untimely death of Mama Squirrel in front of the Tindall store a few months ago. The Tindalls immediately instigated a search for the nest. After many hours it was located in a nearby palm tree. The three hungry babies, their eyes not yet open, were removed to a felt-lined shoe box in the rear of the store. The mother squirrel's misfortune turned out to be her children's gain, for probably no members of the squirrel family in Florida ever had it so good. Here are three healthy examples of what patience and kindness will achieve with wildlife.



Peggy, Shorty and Doc get together to form an eye-catching headdress for Mrs. Tindall.

Their house is enclosed in a wire cage at the back of the Tindall home but for pictorial purposes was brought out on the sidewalk.



Decked out in fancy ribbon leashes, the little greys go for their afternoon stroll, and smugly ruminate the life of a squirrel—some squirrels, that is.



STICKS AND STONES

(Continued from Page 2)

NEWSSTAND BLUES

Dear Sir:

If possible I would like very much to have my name placed on your mailing list. Your magazine is a welcome relief from the scourge of unwholesome magazines generally seen on newsstands.

CECIL A. ROGERS
Tampa

LIKES US

Dear Sir:

I have been receiving my copy of *Florida Wildlife* now for quite a few months. I read and enjoy every copy from cover to cover, then pass it along for several more to enjoy.

You and your conservation officers are certainly doing a great service. And I think it is the duty of every outdoor enthusiast to back you one hundred per cent.

R. M. BRAMLETT,
Key West

MAGAZINE HELPS CONSERVATION

Dear Sir:

I am very much interested as well as impressed with your splendid publication. Frankly, it affords a better stimulus toward promoting ideal conservation than any other similar magazine that I am familiar with. It should be a big help toward keeping proper interest geared up among all fellow sportsmen.

G. W. MAYFIELD,
North Miami, Florida

AN AUDUBON BOUQUET

Dear Sir:

I congratulate you on the wonderful work you are doing with the publication, *Florida Wildlife*. I have looked over several copies and am much impressed by them.

I am assistant professor of biology here in the department of biology, University of Florida, and am interested in the wildlife of our state through my work with the Audubon Society.

MINTER J. WESTFALL, JR.,
Sec'y. Treas.
The Florida Audubon Society,
Gainesville, Florida.

ENFORCEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

Dear Sir:

Recently I have had the pleasure of reading several issues of *Florida Wildlife* and it is my opinion that there is a great need for more publications of its type.

The work being done in the fields of public relations and conservation education will certainly do far more to accomplish our common purpose, than law enforcement alone could ever do.

J. S. DeLOACH, JR.,
Warrington, Florida

CONSERVATION INSPIRATION

Dear Sir:

For the past few months I have been receiving your magazine and I wish to thank you and your staff for being included on your mailing list.

My business is vitally dependent upon Florida remaining a sportsman's paradise and its continued attraction for people from every state in the nation. In my opinion, your publication is a great contribution in this direction.

On numerous occasions I have given my copies of *Florida Wildlife* to new arrivals as well as old residents here in St. Petersburg. The comments of these various people have proven to me that the need is imperative for us Floridians to educate the old as well as the young to the great need for conservation of our natural resources. I feel that *Florida Wildlife* will afford inspiration to all who read its valuable information.

SAM R. CALDWELL
St. Petersburg, Florida

MAGAZINE FILLS STATE NEED

Dear Sir:

I have just finished reading a copy of *Florida Wildlife* and since I am interested in hunting and fishing and conservation of wildlife, I liked it very much. It is just the type of magazine this state needs.

WAYNE HOMAN,
Miami, Florida

GOOD FROM COVER TO COVER

Dear Sir:

I have just had an opportunity to read a copy of *Florida Wildlife* from cover to cover and, believe you me, it's the best thing I've seen in many a moon.

I believe more people should read it for a better understanding of what you are trying to do. Put me down on the mailing list and if it costs anything, just send me the bill.

S. M. DeWALT,
West Palm Beach, Florida

(A penny postcard request is all it takes to become a subscriber to FLORIDA WILDLIFE. We've already put your name in the pot and you'll receive your copy regularly each month. ED.)

READY TO PAY

Dear Sir:

It affords me pleasure again to assure you that all of our members enjoy *Florida Wildlife* very much. I am convinced none would fail to subscribe for it even if required to pay for the swell magazine.

DeWITT THOMAS, President,
Lake Area Sportsmen's Club,
Round Lake, Florida

HELL AN' BLAZES

Dear Sir:

We read each issue of *Florida Wildlife* with great interest and often have occasion to refer to it in our work. In the October issue my attention was caught by a phrase in Charles Anderson's article, "The St. Johns River," on Page 9. Anderson refers to "oddly-named Lake Helen Blazes" and I am wondering if you have heard the story of the origin of the name?

The late Sam Summerlin of Kissimmee, son of Jacob Summerlin, the "cattle king of Florida," told me the story some years ago. According to his version, when travelers arriving in Jacksonville would ask where the St. Johns River rose, the natives would tell them, "this river goes all the way to Hell and blazes." It was from that saying that the lake nearest the source of the river received its name, Lake Helen Blazes.

MISS DENA SNODGRASS,
Research Analyst,
Florida State Chamber of Commerce
Jacksonville, Florida

BOUQUET FOR ANDERSON

Dear Sir:

This is to tell you how much I enjoy *Florida Wildlife,* and what a fine job I think you are doing.

I have been receiving your magazine for a year and have kept all my copies. I am having them bound and will keep them for reference. I do considerable free lance writing and use your magazine for reference since my stories and articles use Florida themes.

Four of your back covers—January, June, July and December—I mounted on a mat, framed, and have in my workroom. C. H. Anderson takes terrific pictures and they spark your magazine, lend real appeal, and point to the articles.

If the time comes that you charge subscription rates, I'll be only too happy to pay. I take other magazines, but honsetly, I don't derive half the pleasure from many of them that I do from yours.

V. M. WILLIAMS,
St. Petersburg, Florida

BIG BEAR BAGGED

G. M. Grantham of Taylor County last month killed a large adult male bear about 20 miles north of Perry. The bear was brought down with a buck-shot blast from a single barreled shotgun. Grantham said the bear was one of a number in the vicinity which were responsible for killing domestic hogs.

A total of 599 resident and non-resident fishing permits were issued during the month of August at the county clerk's office in Volusia County.

They're BITING Here

GULF COUNTY

If you want a limit catch of large mouth bass and bream, try wetting your line in the Apalachicola River, Douglas Slough or the lower part of the Chipola River. Worms are the best bet for bream, and the bass seem to have a taste for the River Runt Spook, which they are striking at most any time of the day.

D. M. Parker and J. W. Warr of Bar Harbor, recently made a catch of 16 bass which totaled 70½ pounds. They were caught in the Chipola River on artificial baits. Limit strings of bream and shell cracker have been reported by several anglers.

★ ★ ★

MANATEE COUNTY

Live minnows are the bait to use for bass on the Braden River and Ward Lake. If you fish in deep water you can get a rise out of the bass in early morning and after 2 p.m. Gib Thompson of Oneco, a short time ago, pulled a seven pound bass from Ward Lake.

Bream are being caught in the Myakka River, and speckled perch are also beginning to bite.

★ ★ ★

COLLIER COUNTY

Bass and speckled perch have been taking live minnows at Lake Trafford and in roadside canals. Bass have also been striking artificial lures during early morning and later afternoon hours, along the grass beds close to shore. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Howsan recently bagged 22 speckled perch at Lake Trafford.

★ ★ ★

CHOCTAWHATCHEE RIVER

You won't have any trouble hooking into bass on the Choctawhatchee River if you use underwater lures, and fish early in the morning. Bream are being taken on earth worms and speckled perch are hitting small minnows.

In two fishing trips on the river, Thomas Moore landed 12 bass, the largest weighing eight pounds, nine ounces. The fish were hooked on an underwater artificial minnow.

LAKE COUNTY

Lake County fishermen are having plenty of luck with large-mouth bass and speckled perch. The fish are hitting at lakes Harris, Erie, Guma, Sumner, Cypress, Lucy and Emma.

The bass are grabbing Hawaiian Wigglers, 2000 plug, Lucky 13 and live minnows early in the morning and late evening. In cloudy weather, they strike throughout the day. The best spots to fish are around bonnet pads and in grassy areas.

★ ★ ★

WAKULLA COUNTY

Red breast bream in the Ochlocknee River near Sanburn, and Porter Lake are keeping things interesting for Wakulla County sportsmen. The fish are snapping at crickets and camphor worms from noon until dark.

Claude Rountree recently made a haul of 25 bream on the river, and J. B. Kyle snagged eight bass in two hours fishing with artificial lures in Porter Lake near Smith Creek.

★ ★ ★

ST. LUCIE RIVER

The north fork of the St. Lucie River from the Martin-St. Lucie County line northward to White City, has been cleared of hyacinths, and according to reports, affords some of the finest fishing in the state.

The water abounds with an ample supply of bream, speckled perch and plenty of black bass in addition to a large variety of salt water fish such as snook, snapper, sheephead and tarpon. Boats and motors are available at White City and Stuart.

★ ★ ★

LAKE OKEECHOBEE

Black bass are striking spoons and plugs in many areas of Lake Okeechobee. Because the bass are hitting best in the grassy areas, weedless spoons have proved most successful.

Speckled perch are also hitting at the mouths of rivers and streams around the lake. The "specks" are rising for minnows and artificial flies in early morning and later afternoon.



Clubs

By
SARAH D. ALBERSON

CLUB PROGRAM

Now that hunting season is well under way, interest in your club should be at a peak. It is natural that at this time sportsmen should like to get together to talk about their hunting experiences and share their enthusiasm with others. This is fine and good, and a sportsmen's club would be dull indeed without the good fellowship around the clubhouse fireplace, but interest cannot end there.

In order to have a successful club it is necessary to set up a definite program of projects needed in your area. This should be given careful thought and after it has been decided the projects that are of vital importance to insure better hunting, fishing and conservation, committees should be appointed to carry out the projects.

Many of the outdoor magazines offer, free for the asking, bulletins outlining various club projects and suggestions for entertainment, both for pleasure and profit. One of these bulletins entitled, "Shooting Dog Stakes," by Bud Jackson, printed by Sports Afield, gives full details on how to put on Field Trials in connection with club projects. Another bulletin, "Add A Trap and Skeet Layout," by Jimmy Robinson of Sports Afield, is worth writing for.

"Here Are Your Birds," by Horace Mitchell, tells of another club project, pen raising quail, mallard ducks and pheasants. There are numerous such bulletins that will give you full information about such projects and they may be had by writing to The Sportsmen's Club Director, Sports Afield, 405 Second Ave. So., Minneapolis 1, Minn.

PROJECTS

Some of the most successful projects undertaken by Florida clubs are as follows:

Anti-pollution activity
Junior Sportsmen's Clubs
Women's Auxiliaries
Safety in Sports
Forest Fire Protection
Obeyance of Fish and Game Laws
Improving land-owner and sportsmen's relations
Cooperation with Wildlife Officers
Hyacinth Eradication
Assist Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission in Fish Restocking and Fish Rescue Work
Fight against Predator and Rough Fish
Creel Census
Release of Game Fish
Planting of game food patches
Predator control
Rent a farm for game refuge
Assist in restocking of game
Operating game farms
Supply wildlife food, trees and shrubs to farmers
Arranging with farmers to plant food patches for game
Conservation contests in schools
Educational programs in schools
Furnish speakers on conservation
Interest local newspaper in your program
Send regular club bulletin to members

ENTERTAINMENT

At business meetings, the Board of Directors discuss business and plans for the club, taking the responsibility for these details from the general membership. At the regular meetings, business should be short, including only that which is necessary to ratify or veto the action of the board. Roll call and announcements are important. New members should be introduced and visitors acknowledged. The program of the regular meetings should include at least one good speaker, such as your Wildlife Officer; a biologist from the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, if convenient; the Judge or some city or county official interested in your program.

Wildlife movies are available, some without cost and others on low rental basis, from many sources. Your Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Chambers of Commerce in almost every City, Field and Stream Magazine, and many others provide this service to clubs.

Many Florida sportsman's clubs have found types of club entertainment which not only pays for itself, but in most cases, raises the funds needed to sustain the organizations and their functions.

Some of the best on the money-raising program are fish frys and barbecues, bingo parties and dances, sport shows, fishing contests, carnivals, joint entertainment for ladies and juniors, and, of course, the annual banquet or dinner.

Always a good bet for raising a few dollars is an illustrated lecture. Bait and fly casting exhibitions; skeet, trap, pistol and rifle shoots; turkey shoots and field trials are usually good for some revenue. A major step in the direction of fund-raising is the erection of a club house, which is a solid foundation for many entertainment activities.

I am sure these ideas will multiply and grow and grow if you put on your "thinking cap." Good luck to you in your club projects. If we can be of any assistance don't hesitate to drop a card to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee.

CLUB DOINGS

S. L. Ditto was elected president of the Caloosahatchee Conservation Club at a recent meeting in Fort Myers.

Also named to office were C. C. Trowbridge, vice-president; W. B. Seabrook, secretary, and Guy M. Strayhorn, treasurer. Selected to serve on the board of directors were Carl R. Roberts, J. T. Chapman, Wayne W. Lewis, Tollie A. Davis, Dr. J. Fred Bartleson, J. Elwyn Kelly and Dr. W. J. Ganey.

The Volusia County Wildlife Association is offering prizes to members who kill the greatest number of predators during the 1948-49 hunting season.

Animals such as wildcats, skunks, armadillos, rattlesnakes and predatory hawks, will each represent a given number of points. This point system will be based on the destructiveness of each animal. Top award will be a double barreled shotgun.

Frank Antal, Jr., John Loucakis and Bob Becker have been appointed as a committee to work out details of the contest.

At a recent meeting the club approved plans for a membership drive to be conducted on a competitive basis. The person sponsoring the greatest number of new memberships will be presented a .22 caliber rifle.

Morris Dowling of Baker County has added another big bear to his growing list of kills. He recently brought down a 500 pounder in the northern section of Baker County near Baxter. Alone when he came upon the huge "bruin," Dowling was forced to use both rifle and pistol to make the kill.

FEDERATION NOTES

OFFICERS

President.....Ralph Cooksey, St. Petersburg
Treasurer.....E. A. Markham, Gulfport
Recording Secretary.....George A. Speer, Sanford
Executive Secretary.....Mrs. Helen Sullivan

Alberson Quits Post; Successor Is Named

Mrs. Helen O. Sullivan of Gulfport has been appointed executive secretary of the Florida Wildlife Federation, replacing Sarah Alberson who resigned the post recently, President Ralph G. Cooksey has announced.

A native of Florida, Mrs. Sullivan was formerly business manager and statistician for the state service division of the Veterans Administration offices at Pass-a-Grille Beach.

She is a former national vice-president of the Rainbow Division Women's Auxiliary, and national chairman of the Daughters of the Rainbow Division. In 1939 she was Florida department chairman of the American Legion Auxiliary's legislative committee.

An experienced writer of magazine articles, Mrs. Sullivan received her early education at the Dominican Order of Convents school in Chicago, and graduated from Brenau College, Gainsville, Ga. She took post-graduate work at Northwestern University and studied journalism at Columbia University.



Mrs. Helen Sullivan, newly appointed executive secretary of the Florida Wildlife Federation.

Stressing the importance of Mrs. Sullivan's position, President Cooksey said she would have charge of preparing literature for the federation's conservation education program.

Cooksey said that the organization's progressive plan for educating the public in all phases of wildlife conservation and preservation, will be expanded during the coming months. He added that pamphlet and booklet material will play a major role in the program of education.



This 'gator demonstrated an interest in conservation when he appeared mysteriously at Florida Wildlife Federation headquarters, St. Petersburg. Here he talks things over with Ned Moren, noted herpetologist.

There are 225 pellets in an ounce of No. 6 shot.

* * *

By pushing their trunks up above the surface of the water and breathing through them, elephants can walk on the bottom of a river.

Kissimmee Club to Have $2,500 Angling Roundup

The Kissimmee Sportsman's Association will sponsor "The First Annual Kissimmee Fish Roundup" this year with a total of $2,500 in prizes to be offered, it was decided at a recent meeting.

The site of the contest is Lake Tohopekaliga, where a crew is now "weeding out" the rough fish and tagging the game fish.

To give all types of anglers a crack at the prizes, bream, bluegills, and perch as well as bass, are to be given prize-winning tags. According to club officials, the fish will be worth from $10 to $100 each.

Anglers desiring to enter the "roundup" must become members of the sportsman's association and pay a nominal entrance fee. Junior memberships may be obtained by youths under 16.

World-Wide Conservation Plan Set Up At European Conference

A new organization to be known as the International Union for the Protection of Nature, has been conceived at a joint conference of UNESCO and the French Government in Fontainbleau, France.

The primary function of the organization will be to promote international education in the field of renewable natural resources based upon scientific knowledge.

Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, president of the Wildlife Management Institute, who headed the American delegation to the conference, said American conservation organizations should assist in this worth-while effort to promote better management of natural resources over the entire world. He added that the organization is "soundly conceived and its program is very much needed."

Other conference representatives from the United States were Dr. Harold Coolidge, executive secretary of the Pacific Science Board of Natural Resources Council; George E. Brewer, Jr., of the Conservation Foundation, and Dr. William Vogt of the Pan-American Union.

At the meeting Dr. J. Bernard of Switzerland was elected president for a two year term; Dr. Coolidge was named first vice-president for a six-year term, and Jean-Paul Harroy was elected secretary-general. Fourteen members were appointed to the executive board, including Dr. Vogt, who is author of the current best-selling "Road to Survival."

Headquarters of the new organization will be established at Brussels, Belgium.

Mexican Duck Harvest Discounted by Writer

Hart Stilwell, well-known outdoor writer, minimizes Mexico's annual duck kill in the lead article of the November issue of *Field and Stream.*

Entitled "Is Mexico Slaughtering Our Waterfowl?", the story points out that Mexico, although accused of indiscretion in permitting unlimited duck kills, sale of waterfowl on the open market and other poor game practices, does not really take a huge annual toll of ducks as many North American sportsmen have been led to believe.

Stilwell says that the total number of ducks killed by Mexicans in one year is actually less than the number bagged on the opening day of the waterfowl season in the United States.

Stilwell made an investigation of the alleged Mexican duck slaughter late in 1947 when he was a resident of Mexico City.

Restocking Not Answer To Fisheries Problem, Dequine Tells Clubmen

John F. Dequine, chief fisheries biologist of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, spoke on better fishing at a recent supper-business meeting of the Alachua County Sportsman's Association at Hawthorne.

Dequine told the 150 members and guests that "good fishing could be increased 10 times over by adding the correct chemical elements to the waters to aid in fish breeding and growth."

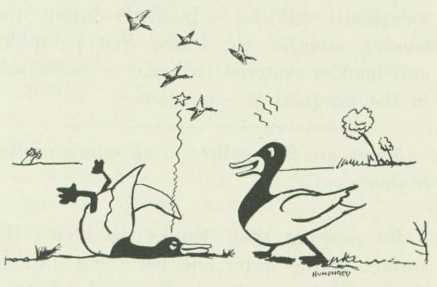
"Restocking," he declared, "does not solve the problem of better fishing. Closed seasons, bag limits and size limits do not appear to help fishing." Dequine said the chemical makeup of the water was the prime consideration. "The plant and animal growth in the water is the thing which determines the results," he explained.

Nominations for 1949 club officers were made at the meeting, and as a special feature, 13 youthful sportsmen were received as junior members in the organization.

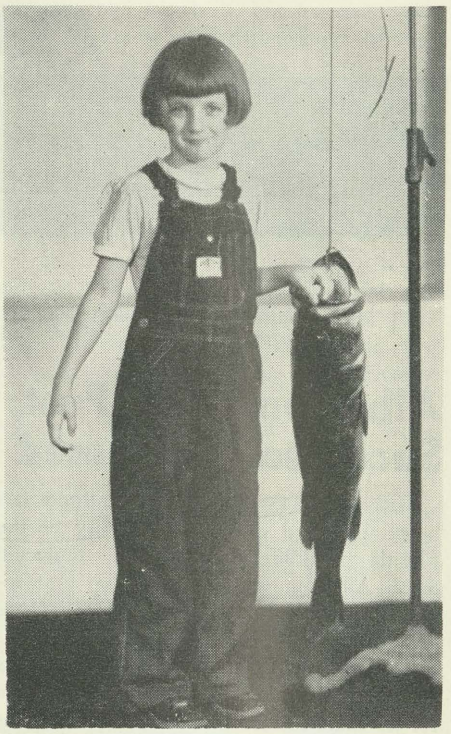
ROUGH FISH REMOVED

Test seining operations of Lake Apopka by biologists of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and net fishing crews accounted for the removal of 13,000 pounds of fish and the return of 17,624 game fish in 10 hauls.

One net sweep alone brought in 1,376 bass from eight inches to 10 pounds.



"Next time you'll remember to let down your landing gear."



Seven - year - old Barbara Jean Sadler of Thomasville, Ga., went over the state line to Florida and pulled this nine-pound bass from Lake Immonia. She caught the fish with a live minnow.

Number Farm Fish Ponds Double Over Past Year

Florida now has a total of 371 artificially constructed farm and fish ponds according to a report of the research and industrial division of the Florida State Chamber of Commerce, published in its weekly review.

This total represents an increase of 102 percent in the number of ponds since the first of the year. In addition, 342 more ponds are planned and in various stages of construction, the report disclosed.

Many of these are farm ponds whose principal purpose is to serve as reservoirs. They are also stocked with fish, fertilized and kept clear of vegetable growth and undesirable fish.

WILD—BUT NOT WILDLIFE!

Some of Florida's hogs are pretty wild, but they're not to be considered wild game —especially in the Ocala National Forest, says Jack Thurmond, district ranger of the U. S. Forest Service.

Asked by many sportsmen if hogs running wild in the forest could be shot during the annual hunt, Thurmond, who has charge of the affair, answers them all with a polite but emphatic "no."

A sixty-pound gar fish has been entered in the Fish Rodeo of the Santa Rosa Sportsman's Club, S. L. Craft, president, has reported.



The large mouth bass being held by happy Allen Whittington of Lake Apopka is worth almost $100 per pound. The six-pound eight-ounce fish bears a tag identifying it as a $500 winner in the Lake Apopka Fish Rodeo. Whittington caught the bass from a dock with a "crazy crawler" plug.

Scientist Group Urges Regulation of Coastal Fisheries Operations

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has recommended joint state regulations of fishing operations along the Atlantic coast, and has asked for legislation to designate them supervisors of the project.

The commission, an independent body of marine scientists who promote conservation work and scientific study in the fishing grounds off the Atlantic coast, suggested that 14 seaboard states, of which Florida is one, should ratify legislation putting the fishing operations of vessels in offshore waters under one authority.

The shrimp fishery of the South Atlantic States affecting South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, was one of the specific examples recommended for joint regulation by the commission.

Dade County Outdoor Club Sees Underwater Picture

Dr. F. G. Walton Smith of the University of Miami Marine Research Division, showed his famous underwater color movies of marine life at a meeting this month of the Sportsman's Club of Dade County.

The marine scientist spoke to the members of the club on the progress of marine research. He outlined the work he was doing in the field, and talked of the objectives of the marine researchers.

A professor who has trained fleas says that a healthy flea can jump what would to us be the equivalent of half a mile.

Game Commission's Armless Sportsman Begins Club Tour

A series of appearances before sportsmen's clubs throughout Florida was begun recently by Joe Padderatz, the armless casting and shooting exhibitionist of the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Padderatz, who has appeared before more than 25,000 persons at fairs and private performances during the last few months, has offered his services to any Florida sportsman's club at no charge.

His demonstration includes casting into a box from a distance of 40 feet, baiting his own hook, starting his own outboard motor and other remarkable feats which he accomplishes with no hands.

WHAT ABOUT COOTS?

(Continued from Page 11)

food, the coot has earned one faithful companion—the "widgeon."

The widgeon, which doesn't seem to be able to get his behind under the water far enough to get the deeper morsels of pondweed, depends upon the coot to do this diving job for him. When a coot dives for a strip of weed, the widgeon peers down into the water, watching the coot's every move. When the coot bobs back to the surface, "friend widgeon" is waiting for him. As the coot's bill breaks the surface with a strip of pondweed, the widgeon swipes the weed and paddles off.

The gluttonous coot eats large quantities and a wide variety of food which sportsmen believe might otherwise feed ducks, and hunters in northern states bear this in mind when they go duck hunting. However, this is a highly controversial question. Hunters, game biologists and managers of game and bird sanctuaries don't seem to be able to agree on the subject, but they all admit that the coot is the glutton of the waterfowl kingdom.

So, Mr. Sportsman, that's the ticket. Florida waters are black with coots; they're fine food for the table, and once you convince them that you are after their hide, they ARE going to fly and you will need good timing and good shooting to bring them down.

In addition to all that there is more. Where you can only bag a total of four ducks a day during the season, you can kill **twenty** coots! Don't forget too that duck shooting is allowed one half hour before sunrise this year, and its nice to know that after you have your bag limit by early morning that you can spend additional hours shooting the coot. And there is still another angle. A hunter does not need a duck stamp to shoot coots. A regular state license is all that is necessary.

So why not give the coot a try? Shoot hell out of him and it'll convince both you and the bird he's not such a tough guy after all.

Ed Albritton Resigns Chief Officer Post; Assistant Takes Over

Ed Albritton, chief wildlife officer of the First Conservation District since 1944, has resigned to devote full time to his cattle and citrus business.

Succeeding Albritton will be John Swift, former assistant chief wildlife officer of the First District. Roscoe Godwin, Ehren, has been appointed assistant chief.

Albritton began his law enforcement career in the early 1920's, and served two terms as sheriff in DeSoto County from 1936 to 1944.

Before Swift joined the game commission, he was chief of police of Clearwater.



These five bass totaling 19 pounds eight ounces, were caught in Bayou George in Bay County by (left to right) John Boyd, Burton H. Clark, Michael Clark and Bill Williams.



Five of the first deer to be killed this season during the Eglin Field hunt. Left to right: Hilary Stuart, postmaster of Ft. Walton; J. B. Royall, U. S. Marshal, North District of Florida; Federal Judge Dozier A. Devane of Tallahassee; Chester S. Dishang of Wauchula, U. S. Marshal, South District; and A. A. Carmichael, Attorney General of Alabama.

Sportsmen Urged To Turn In Leg Bands From Migratory Birds

One forgotten game band in the hunting-coat pocket of a sportsman may hold the key to some perplexing problem of waterfowl management, says the Wildlife Management Institute.

According to the Institute, sportsmen can contribute substantially to the perpetuation of their sport by merely returning every band found on game birds brought down in the field. The agency urged that tags found on migratory species, such as ducks, geese and doves, whose movements have an important effect on the establishment of seasons and game bags, be turned in.

Hundreds of thousands of bands are affixed to the legs of waterfowl each year by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, by privately licensed banders, the wildlife services of Canada, and other far northern areas of America.

Without the complete cooperation of sportsmen, however, this intensive banding operation would fail. It does little good to band migratory fowl unless the bands recovered by hunters are returned. Little time is needed to drop a band in an envelope addressed to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service!

Thirty or 32 inches are the best shotgun barrel, lengths for shooting wildfowl. The longer sighting plane makes gun pointing more accurate, and the long full choke barrel results in the desired dense pattern of shot.

January 20-29 Set For Miami Sportsman Show

The first annual Miami Sportsman's Show will be held at Dinner Key January 20-29 under the auspices of the American Veteran's Committee, directors Grover Theis and Kay J. Kennedy announce.

The show is a trade event at which manufacturers, distributors and dealers of sporting goods will exhibit. The show will also emphasize conservation, educational and community participation features.

Highlighting the show will be outdoor exhibits by many organizations including the Audubon Society and the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Joe Padderatz, the commission's armless casting and shooting exhibitionist will be on the program.

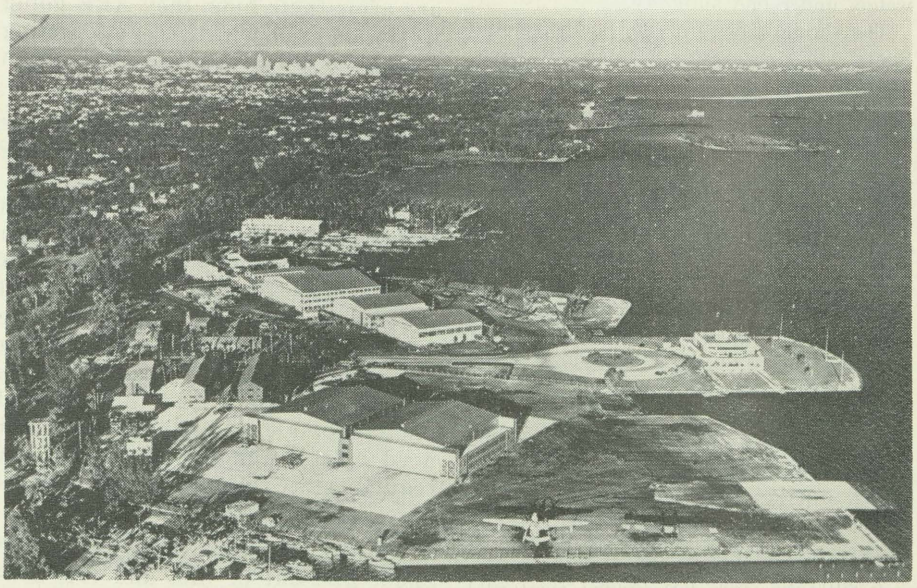
FISH CHECKLIST AVAILABLE

The result of over fifteen years of research, an excellent reference booklet with the imposing title, "A List of Common and Scientific Names of the Better Known Fishes of the United States and Canada" has been released by the American Fisheries Society. The booklet is completely indexed and covers 571 species. Copies are available from Dr. William C. Beckman, Museums Annex, Ann Arbor, Michigan, for 25 cents.

IT'S A GOOD STORY ANYWAY

Mrs. Myrtis Chavous of Old Town recently caught a large-mouth bass without hooking it.

When she pulled the fish into the boat she found that her hook was lodged in the eye of another hook that some less lucky angler had left there in a previous encounter with the fish.



Dinner Key, site of the Miami Sportsman's Show. The two hangars in foreground will house the show. The Miami skyline can be seen in background.

Sportsman's 'Mag' Features Florida's Fishing and Hunting

Florida hit the national publicity jackpot this month. Almost the entire issue of *Outdoors*, well known nationally circulated sportsman's publication, is devoted to feature articles on hunting and fishing in Florida.

Featured in the issue is a roundup story on Florida fishing and hunting by William W. Weeks, editor of *Florida Wildlife*. Entitled: "This Is Florida," the article covers salt water angling around the coastline of the state, and hunting and fresh water fishing over its length and breadth.

Also contained in the publication is an article on Florida fly rod fishing, by Ernest Lyons, and stories by Rube Allyn, Lee Wulff and other well known Florida writers.

The magazine is read by a half million sportsmen throughout the country.



These hunters look pretty happy after bagging four wild turkeys shortly after opening day, in St. Johns County near the river by the same name. Left to right: Ruth Collier, Leo Byrd and Lawson Burdett of St. Augustine.

FLYWAY STAFF INCREASED

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has expanded its staff of flyway biologists from four to 11 men, according to Acting Director Clarence Cottam. Plans also were announced for assigning at least one airplane to each flyway for use in surveys.

Until this month there were only four biologists, one to each major flyway, who were responsible for obtaining data required for federal waterfowl management and conservation.

The panda is one of the rarest of mammals, with the face of a raccoon, feet like a cat, and body similar to that of the bear.

EIGHT-FOOT RATTLER WANTED

Ross Allen, Florida's famed herpetologist, of Silver Springs, has a standing offer of $200 to anyone who brings to him an eight-foot Florida diamond-back rattlesnake.

Allen says he has never received on that size, although he has several eight-foot skins on display. The skins, he explains, stretch in the process of tanning.



These bass beauties were caught in Lake Okeechobee on a "Dalton Special" by P. P. Dalton.

Hunting Dogs Rated High Magazine Survey Shows

America's sportsmen are "going to the dogs " Not that their morals are getting any worse, but that more and more sportsmen are buying and using the hunting breeds of dogs, says OUTDOORSMAN MAGAZINE.

This recent survey, projected over 300,000 active sportsmen, disclosed that 236,340 (78%) owned one or more dogs, with 21% of the group owning an average of 3-2/3 dogs each, for a grand total of 419,720 dogs owned by 236,340 sportsmen.

Ownership was as follows:

Bird Dogs (pointers, setters, German Shorthaired pointers)	135,571
Hounds (Beagles, bloodhounds, blueticks, black and tans, coonhounds, redbones, fox hounds)	120,879
Spaniels (Cockers, springers, Brittanies	68,834
Pet Breeds	42,392
Retrievers (Labradors, Chesapeakes, goldens)	18,887

106,609 of the dogs were a year of age or younger, 79,327 were one or two years old, and 68,834 were two or three years old; 8,394 were 10 years old or older.

188,874 (45%) were registered dogs; 345,439 (82.3%) are trained.

The speed of the bird, the distance of the bird from the gun, and the angle at which it is flying in relation to the shooter, are important factors in determining the correct lead.

Florida Is Praised In New Fishing Book

Robert Page Lincoln tosses bouquets at the state's fresh water fishing in the twenty-six page Florida section of his new book, "Guide To Best Fishing."

Lincoln's flattering report on Florida fishing gives the angler the low-down on where to fish; what to use for bait; what time of the year to use specific baits; and comprehensive data on fishing camps, guide service and a wealth of informative hints for the tourist angler.

Of Florida in general, he says: "By reason of its many lakes and great numbers of black bass, Florida's fresh water fishing is definitely in the unusual class and must be placed in a category essentially its own."

The book praised the work being done by Ben C. Morgan, director of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, saying: "Through him and under his leadership, Florida should take its place among the leading fish and game states of the union."

Mother bats carry their newborn with them during the first days of life. The young bat clings to this mother's fur with claw and teeth as she flies about in search of food.



Who says pound-netting for catfish can't be profitable? The above picture shows a load of 2,600 pounds of catfish taken from the St. Johns River by pound-netter E. B. Moss of Satsuma. The picture was taken by Mr. Moss.

A CRACKER-POLE THRILLER

Landing a 12-pound bass provides real excitement even for a seasoned rod and reel fisherman, but it proved to be the thrill of a lifetime for T. P. Strickland, of Tallahassee, because he accomplished the feat while using an ordinary cane, cracker pole. Strickland landed the prize bigmouth, after a 40-minute battle, while fishing recently at Lake Imonia.

Audubon Society Announces Wildlife Tours of Glades

The National Audubon Society has invited more than 15,000 of its members to participate in a series of wildlife tours through the Everglades this year.

Observation of birds, animals and plants in the only subtropical area of the United States will be offered the members of the society.

One-day tours by station wagons and boats will be conducted Sundays and Wednesdays throughout December. A series of two-day tours to the Cuthbert rookery in Everglades National Park, will begin in January.

The trips begin at 8:45 a. m. from the Audubon Society office at 13 McAllister Arcade, Miami.

Fox Hunters Conclave Draws Noted Speakers

Prominent state officials and conservationists attended the annual convention and bench show of the Florida State Fox Hunters Association in Clermont recently. Fox hunters from all over the Southeast, and their dogs, were present at the four day session.

The festivities began with addresses by U. S. Senators Claude Pepper and Spessard Holland; Governor-elect Fuller Warren, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Director Ben C. Morgan; State Comptroller Clarence M. Gay, and Florida Wildlife Federation President Ralph G. Cooksey.

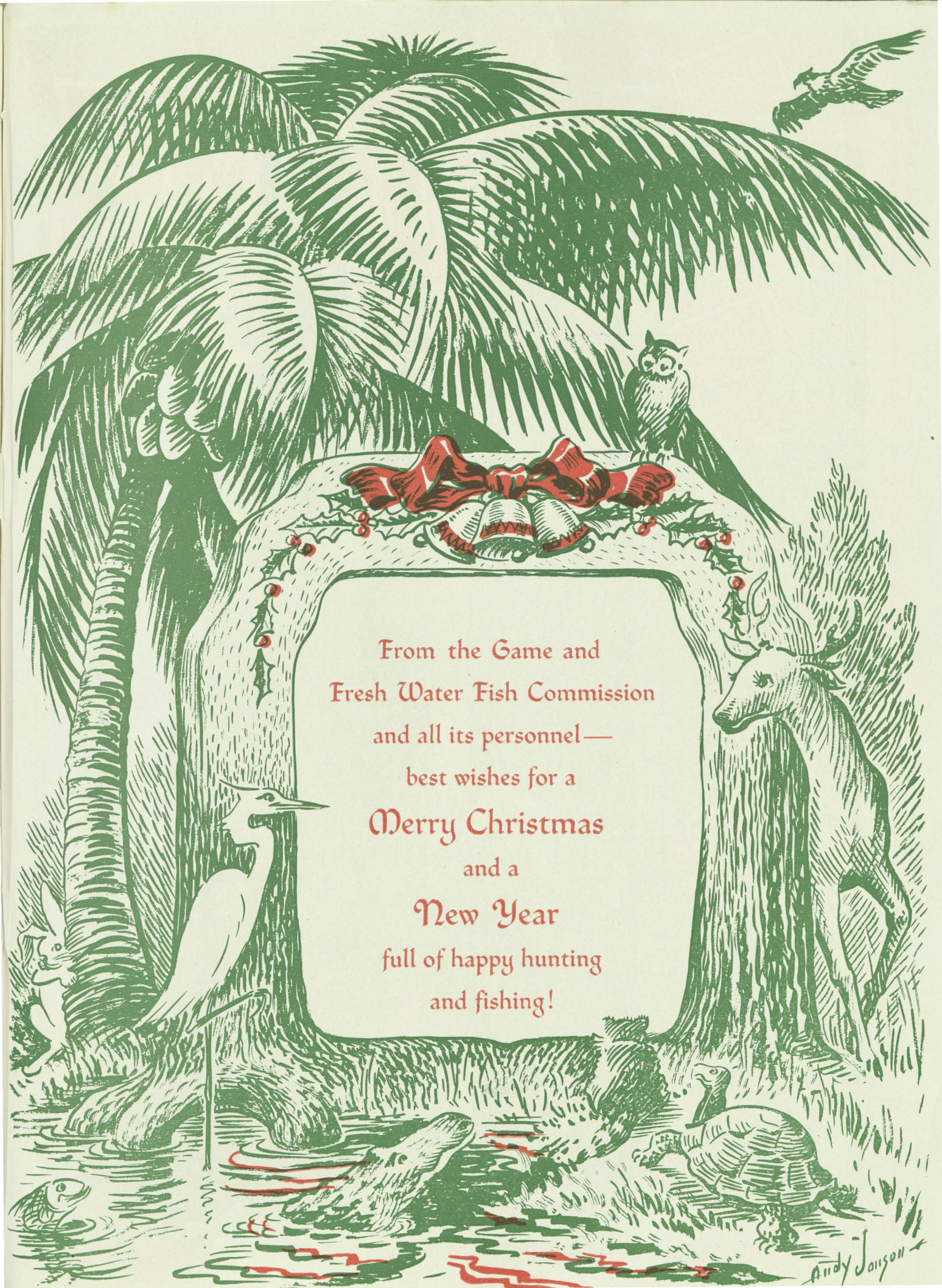
The fox hunters took the field on three successive days.

The average serving of roe in restaurants is half of a large shad roe, or from 10,000 to 15,000 eggs. The total number of eggs in the roe taken from a single fish is from 23,000 to 32,000.

BERTRAM by Humphreys



"I've tried and tried to make him point like other dogs."


From the Game and
Fresh Water Fish Commission
and all its personnel—
best wishes for a
Merry Christmas
and a
New Year
full of happy hunting
and fishing!
Andy Jayson



. . . HUNTER AND HIS HOUNDS